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SUBJECT Alfonso Callejas

CHARLIE ROSE: During Sunday night's debate, one issue was that of the CIA manuals which appeared to encourage such subversive tactics as assassination. Those manuals were distributed to Nicaragua's largest rebel group, known as the Nicaraguan Democratic Force. President Reagan contended that the controversial terrorist advice was deleted from most of the manuals, but the CIA disputes that claim, and so does our guest, Alfonso Callejas. He is a member of the ruling directorate of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force.

Mr. Callejas, how did you first learn about these manuals?

ALFONSO CALLEJAS: Well, in fact, in last December I run into this manual in one of our offices in Tegucigalpa.

ROSE: Which is in Honduras, which is the base for the...

CALLEJAS: Well, we have a communication office there. And so I run into this manual. I read it, and I was shocked when I read in the New York Times last week about the hiring of professional killers to assassinate political targets. Because in the manual that I read, it had nothing of the sort. So, apparently, the manuals that I got had been edited and those pages were taken out.

ROSE: How many pages were taken out, two?

CALLEJAS: There were two pages taken out. Yes.

ROSE: And you're talking about the use of criminals to

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assassinate members of your own force to create martyrs? Is that what you're talking about?

CALLEJAS: No, I never saw such a thing. Evidently -- I learned from reading the New York Times that also that contained, to me, was a surprise.

And you know, in this business of war, we do get a lot of advices from different sources as to what we should do. And many people want us to imitate the Salvadoran guerrillas, for instance, and blowing up dams and power lines and kidnapping people.

ROSE: Do you do that?

CALLEJAS: Of course not. We are not terrorists.

ROSE: How did they end up with the CIA-related manual that encourages this kind of terrorism? Which many people would say is state-sponsored terrorism, much like the kind of terrorism that the Secretary of State of the United States has denounced and said that the United States should have no part.

CALLEJAS: Well, I fully agree with Mr. Shultz and with Mr. Reagan. Terrorism isn't part of our struggle. We want to establish in Nicaragua respect for human rights.

ROSE: But why the manual, then? I mean how did the manual...

CALLEJAS: Well, the manual came about, for what I read from Mr. Chamorro's statements to the...

ROSE: He's another member of the directorate.

CALLEJAS: That's correct.

The statement that he made to the Miami Herald. And he states that this gentleman came and offered his notes on how a guerrilla should be conducted. And he thought that there was some good ideas into that. Well, when the manual was printed, he, himself, discovered these two horrible pages with all the objections. So he says that he...

ROSE: That was page 70 and 71?

CALLEJAS: 69, 70...

ROSE: Right in there.

CALLEJAS: That's correct.

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ROSE: And so he deleted them.

CALLEJAS: And they were replaced by pages that did not contain anything that would offend our feelings and our policies.

ROSE: What happened to the man who gave you that manual, the notes?

CALLEJAS: I don't know. I never met this gentleman. And what I saw was that manual, and the story I read was that he came down as a free-lancer and offer this advice.

ROSE: Did he say he was from the CIA?

CALLEJAS: No, on the contrary. Mr Chamorro said that he was not presented by any CIA agent and that he came on his own, and also that he paid for the printing, and also gave our forces some communications equipment. He seems to [be] disposed of a lot of money.

ROSE: He also -- what was still in the manual was the phrase "neutralize government officials."

CALLEJAS: Yeah. I'm glad you brought that up. See, I read it in Spanish, the translation. In Spanish, the connotation that the slang in English gives it, to neutralize, doesn't mean what you understand here.

ROSE: What most of us understand here, it means to assassinate a...

CALLEJAS: That's correct.

ROSE: ...government official, to assassinate the Sandinista leadership.

CALLEJAS: In Spanish it just mean neutralize, like...

ROSE: It means kidnap?

CALLEJAS: ...when the quarterback is neutralized by the defense team, see? So, in Spanish it doesn't mean that to us.

ROSE: Was there any remaining material in that manual with respect to creating a martyr within your own forces by having your own forces hire criminals? That was not there. It was...

CALLEJAS: You know, that would have been tremendous objections, if our own forces would be trained to kill their own fellow.

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ROSE: To create a martyr. That would be objectionable to you.

CALLEJAS: How would I feel if I'm one of the combatants? The martyr could be me.

ROSE: Yes. And that would not make you feel very good at all.

CALLEJAS: So that would create a tremendous shock amongst our ranks, because I might be that martyr that they need. So it's absurd.

See, like I said before, we do get many advices from many free-lancers that volunteer advices. We don't necessarily take them.

ROSE: I've got less than a minute. Tell me how the war is going to end up. Is it going to end up because you have no more funds and you're not able to prosecute the war? Are you now dependent on what happens in the elections that the Sandinistas are engaged in in Nicaragua? What's going to be the end result?

CALLEJAS: Well, I hope I had a crystal ball. First of all, it's not going to end up because of lack of funds, because...

ROSE: But the Congress has said no more funds, and those funds have run out.

CALLEJAS: Well, we have been operating without any assistance from the United States Government.

ROSE: Are you getting assistance from other people?

CALLEJAS: We are getting assistance from other places that we have to keep confidential. So, our dependency from the help approved by Congress is no longer. So, we cannot be called the puppets of the CIA, like some liberals like to call us, especially in Europe.

ROSE: Thank you very much, Mr. Alfonso Gallejas. We thank you for joining us to talk about the manual and about the nature of the war and how it goes for the Contras.